

What a wacky weekend this Memorial Day weekend is turning out to be. There's more news about all kinds of weird stuff flying all over. This business sure is changing. Let me start out by saying that next weeks' edition of "Arena Ramblings" will be the final one so to speak. I will be debuting this column in the July issue of Chairshots, a fairly new sheet put out by Barry Rose that has enormous potential. It has a list of writers that will make me proud to join. I was thinking about writing for this newsletter when it first came out but I wanted to see what direction it was going in before I made my decision. I decided to go for it because I feel it's a winner. Now since Barry has my subscriber list I'm assuming most of you subscribe to the sheet but if you don't, please check it out, you won't be sorry. Starting in August it will be bi-weekly like the old "AR" was. Current price is \$1.00 per issue and you can write to Barry at 200 Leslie Dr., #717, Hallandale, FL 33009. And I'll see you there next month. Obviously please don't send me any more envelopes. I will either send you back the envelopes I have remaining or just the stamps off of them as they are still good as long as there is no postmark on them. Let me know which you prefer. (Or you could send them to Jeff Mullins to use when he comes out of hiatus.) I still of course would love to correspond with those of you that wish.

Two real big news items this week. First of all, Jim Herd and Wayne Coulter have started up a 900 line. That's not really news in itself but we could dub this the "Hardcore Hotline" as here is the list of personalities that will be on the 900 line: Dave Meltzer, Steve Beverly, Scott Hudson, John Arezzi, Georgiann Makropoulos, John Clark, Paul E. Dangerously, Jim Cornette, Dutch Mantell, and Terry Funk. Wade Keller was invited but declined since he wants to start his own sometime in the future. The number is (900) 903-9030. You could actually let all your subs expire to the sheets and call the hotline although instead of paying 3.00 a week it will probably cost you \$20.....Hypocrite of The Year: Mark Madden. Apparently Madden is trying to get the slot on the WCW hotline that was vacated by Steve Beverly. Does anyone remember the ranting and raving this guy did about Steve in the pages of the Torch talking about a conflict in interest? Have to love it. Keep it up Mark, and your rep will be just as good as Mike Lano's. (Sorry Mike, but how can you disagree?).....The second item is that WCW seems to have officially given up as a national promotion. Word this week is that they will cut to 200 house shows next year and just promote in the southeast. They were about to lose their Baltimore site and they have been doing horrendous in Philly the last few times there. As of press time, there were plans to do zero house shows in July with just 12 days of consecutive tapings at MGM Studios in nearby Orlando. I believe the house shows in August kick off with a 10 city Florida "Hot Summer Nights" tour starting 8/21 in Jacksonville with these other cities included as well: Orlando, Daytona, Ft. Pierce, St. Petersburg, Melbourne, Ft. Myers, Tallahassee, and two others.

Chris Qualmann, his girlfriend Barbara Baskin, and myself attended a WCW show in Jacksonville on 5/29. Here's what happened: 1) Erik Watts beat Joey Maggs in 8:00 with the STF. Pretty good opener. Watts has improved. *3/4 2) Watts made Mike Thor submit to the STF in 7:17. Thor was in the ring and they announced his opponenet Marcus Bagwell but Bagwell wasn't there. So Thor took the Mic and started bad mouthing Marcus until Watts came to the ring and took Bagwell's place. * 3) Maxx Payne basically squashed Kensuke Sasaki in 8:06. And then you wonder why this deal with New Japan is about to bite the dust. Amazing that WCW pays to fly these guys in when they could just use jobbers in their place since that is how they use them. Kensuke had no offense until the last minute where he had three stiff clotheslines but missed an elbow drop from the middle rope. Payne then scored one elbow smash of his own for the win. * 4) Ron Simmons over Dick Slater with a standing powerslam in 11:11. They did a bit where Slater was concealing something in his elbow pad which was nothing more than a pointy elbow. 1/2 * 6) Sting & Davey Boy Smith beat Rick Rude & Paul Orndorff in 18:35. Orndorff was a sub for Van Vader who has a broken rib from the PPV bout with Bulldog. Match would have been a whole lot better but they did this bit where Rude and Paul were arguing with each other as soon as they got to the ring. They argued about who would take their ring robe off first, neither would accept each others tag, etc. They even had Rude lead chants of "Paula" when Orndorff wasn't looking. Finish saw Bulldog backslide Orndorff for the win. Rude and Orndorff then almost went at it with Rude getting face cheers until he held up the US belt which brought the boo birds back. ** 7) Dustin Rhodes beat Barry Windham via DQ in an old fashioned bloodbath at 18:12. If you love juice, you would have loved this bout. Great brawl. Dustin hit a gusher as is usual when he blades. Never a little. Windham spit in this kids face who was mocking him at ringside. The Jax cops were shaking their heads in amazement as Barry bit into Dustin's cut. These guys are nuts. Good false finish as Dustin hit a top rope lariat for a two count. After Nick Patrick took a bump, Barry

hit Dustin with the NWA title and Patrick counted the pin but then saw the belt laying on the mat and reversed the decision and gave Dustin the win. ***3/4
NOTES ON THE CARD: Crowd was approx 1,600. Event coordinator CM Crist told me 2,000 but that seemed high.....They announced that Vader wouldn't be there before the show and offered refunds. Due to his no show only two of the skedded 7 bouts took place. Probably the worst card in Jax I've been to but I enjoyed it nonetheless. We hung out in the back before the show, during intermission, and after the show since Chris now represents Davey Boy Smith and we were guests of his in the back. Nothing much to report on that happened back there.....After the card we went to the airport bar where the usual jockeying for rats was taking place...Whoops, I missed a match in those results. Match 5 saw Arn Anderson over Barbarian in 9:35 when Barbie missed a boot to the face and Arn rolled him up. Pretty bad. Dud This was to have been Arn vs. Chris Benoit which I was really looking forward to but Chris is in New Japan for the Jr. Tourney and probably won't be back....Back to the bar. The most interesting note was a battle for one blond rat between Arn and Joey Maggs. Who won? Let's just say Maggs went back to Baltimore with one less notch on his gunbelt.

In an incident which looks more to be than it really is, Vince McMahon has resigned as President of Titan Sports. Linda McMahon is now president. This was talked about long ago as Vince just wanted the company in someone else's name if things went down with the DEA and it looks like that may be coming closer. This won't affect his on air positions nor in office stuff either.....By the way, Lance Russell is playing a big part in that new 900 number. He quit WCW's before signing on to do it. Despite rumors you may hear, this 900 line for Meltzer has nothing to do with the way the Observer and how it is run....WCW held tryouts at the Tampa Sportatorium on 5/26 and 5/27. Knowing how much Florida indy wrestling there is, the turnout was huge. Blackjack Mulligan and Jody Hamilton were the scouts watching. Mulligan made a comment that they could run three territories with the number of guys that showed up. A few guys were signed to developmental contracts, which is similar to what the Blackhearts are under. The guys will be paid a per week salary for 6 months while working out in Hamilton's gym and working "B" shows. Two guys that were signed were Thunder & Lightning who worked for the IWF. Of all the guys who showed up and knowing most of their workrate I can't figure out why these two got the nod especially in this day and age of the steroid scare in pro wrestling. These two guys are stiff with nothing more than a few moves to their repertoire which include punches, kicks, and clotheslines. Another guy that signed was Dave Heath who will do a vampire gimmick. This will be interesting since Heath was one of the original Blackhearts with Tom Nash and there is some legit heat between them. Another team signed was a black team called the Manatee Express. Not sure who they are but could be Soulman Alex G. and Steven Green. Other notables trying out included Jimmy Backlund and Mark Starr. Told Backlund was his usual tremendous self. Can't figure out why he wouldn't get hired, oh sure I can. He didn't get hired because he should have, silly me.....Top two matches at Beach Blast (moved from 7/11 to 7/18 due to Disney tapings) are Sid & Vader vs. Davey Boy & Sting, and Flair vs. Windham. They already shot the promo for the main in Tampa which cost them \$8,000. It's another mini movie in line with the last two Vader-Sting segments. If there is one person out there that thinks wrestling is real, they won't anymore after seeing these goofy bits.....How would this be for a feud. Since Lawler is in Titan, why not bring in Brian Christopher to feud with Lightning Kid?.....Talk is that Johnny Polo (Scotty Flamingo) is already history and Harvey Whippleman will manage Adam Bomb.....Mr. Hughes and Razor Ramon attacked Paul Bearer at the latest tapings and Undertaker carried Paul out. This sets up Taker vs. Hughes feud..... Buy tickets for this WCW feud (you may be the only one) Maxx Payne vs. Jim Neidhart in a battle of submission moves. Yeech!!.....Scott Norton said to be negotiating with Titan.....Klon and myself went to a flea market show in Melbourne on 5/22 with Greg Valentine vs. Max Moon (Paul Diamond) on top. Madusa was in Greg's corner but the highlight for us was before the card as they were doing autograph sessions. I wore my Eddie Gilbert T-shirt. (Get it?) When I went up to Madusa and Greg I paid for a photo of Ducie and made sure she noticed the shirt. I told her I wasn't being a wise guy but it was just ironic that I wore it. She laughed and poked Greg (thought it was supposed to be the other way around) who made an "Oh brother" gesture. Yeah, still a "mark" at heart. Klon handed her a copy of "The Booking Sheet" and madusa started reading it on the way to the back.....That's it for now, any late news will be added at the end. Until next week. See ya, Ron